

# Chapter 5. EMERGENCY SERVICES

## Section 1. GENERAL

### 5-1-1. EMERGENCY DETERMINATION

a. Because of the infinite variety of possible emergency situations, specific procedures cannot be prescribed. However, when you believe an emergency exists or is imminent, select and pursue a course of action which appears to be most appropriate under the circumstances, and which most nearly conforms to the instructions in this manual.

b. An emergency can be either a DISTRESS or URGENCY condition, as defined in the Pilot/Controller Glossary.

#### NOTE-

*A pilot who encounters a DISTRESS condition may declare an emergency by beginning the initial communication with the word MAYDAY, preferably repeated three times. For an URGENCY condition, the word PAN-PAN may be used in the same manner.*

c. If the words MAYDAY or PAN-PAN are not used, and you are in doubt that a situation constitutes an emergency or potential emergency, handle it as though it were an emergency.

d. Consider an aircraft emergency exists and inform the appropriate control facility and the DF net control (See FAAO 7210.3, para 6-3-3, DF Net Control Position Operation), if not the same, when:

1. An emergency is declared by any of the following:

(a) The pilot.

(b) Facility personnel.

(c) Officials responsible for the operation of the aircraft.

2. Reports indicate that the aircraft's operating efficiency is so impaired that a forced landing may be/is necessary.

3. Reports indicate the crew has abandoned the aircraft or is about to do so.

4. Intercept or escort services are requested.

5. The need for ground rescue appears likely.

6. An Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) signal is heard or reported.

#### REFERENCE-

*Subpara 5-1-2c and Para 5-2-8.*

### 5-1-2. RESPONSIBILITY

a. If you are in communication with an aircraft in distress, handle the emergency and coordinate and direct the activities of assisting facilities. Transfer this responsibility to another facility only when you feel better handling of the emergency will result.

b. When you receive information about an aircraft in distress, forward detailed data to the appropriate control facility in whose area the emergency exists.

#### NOTE-

*Notifying the appropriate control facility about a VFR aircraft emergency allows provision of IFR separation if considered necessary.*

c. The ARTCC is responsible for consolidation of all pertinent ELT signal information. Notify the ARTCC of all heard or reported ELT signals.

### 5-1-3. OBTAINING INFORMATION

Obtain enough information to handle the emergency intelligently. Base your decision as to what type of assistance is needed on information and requests received from the pilot. 14 CFR Part 91 authorizes the pilot to determine a course of action.

### 5-1-4. COORDINATION

a. Request necessary assistance from other facilities as soon as possible, particularly if radar or DF service is available.

b. Coordinate efforts to the extent possible to assist any aircraft believed overdue, lost, or in emergency status.

### 5-1-5. PROVIDING ASSISTANCE

a. Provide maximum assistance to aircraft in distress. If the aircraft is transponder equipped and not on an IFR flight plan, request the pilot to squawk code 7700.

#### PHRASEOLOGY-

*REQUEST YOU SQUAWK SEVEN SEVEN ZERO ZERO.*

b. Enlist the service of available radar and DF facilities.

**5-1-6. RECORDING INFORMATION**

Record all actions taken in the provision of emergency assistance.

**5-1-7. SAFE ALTITUDES FOR ORIENTATIONS**

a. Providing a safe altitude, during an orientation, is advisory in nature.

b. Safe altitude computations, once the aircraft position is known, are as follows:

1. Locate the maximum elevation figure on the appropriate VFR sectional chart.

2. To the maximum elevation figure,

(a) add 1,000 feet over nonmountainous terrain, or

(b) add 2,000 feet over mountainous terrain.

3. The mountainous/nonmountainous areas are found in Title 14 CFR, Part 95.